

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Amendments to the Claims

Claim 1 has been amended to specify that the business trip electronic form which not having a continuous business trip period will cause a warning message on a monitor to notify the user. Claim 10 has been amended to specify that the business trip electronic form which having a business trip period overlapping a business trip period of another business trip electronic form will cause a warning message on a monitor to notify the user. The amendments are fully supported by figures 2 and 6 and pertinent description in the specification paragraphs (e.g., [Para 30], and [Para 59]). No new matter is introduced.

In addition, the dependency of claim 11 has been amended to correct the editorial error. Claim 9 and claim 14 are canceled without prejudice according to amendment of claim 1 and claim 10. Therefore, only claims 1-8, 10-13 and 15-20 are pending for further examination.

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Objections to the Specification

The title of the invention is not descriptive.

Response:

A new title clearly indicative of the invention to which the claims are directed is provided in the instant reply. Withdrawal of the objections is respectfully requested.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 101

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101.

Response:

25 Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to specify “showing a warning message on a monitor to notify the user if the predetermined business trip period is not continuous”. (*emphasis added*) As “showing a warning message on a monitor” is a concrete and tangible action of hardware and will lead to a real-world result, the method claim (i.e., claim 1) is now tied to another statutory class of invention, and is directed to a statutory subject

matter.

Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-9

5 Claim 9 is canceled according to the amendment of claim1. Claims 2-8 are dependent upon claim 1, and are directed to statutory subject matter if claim 1 satisfies the requirements in 35 U.S.C. 101.

Claim 10

10 Claim 10 has been amended to specify “showing a warning message on a monitor to notify the user if the first business trip period does overlap the second business trip period” (*emphasis added*) As the monitor is a hardware device, the method claim (i.e., claim 10) is now tied to another statutory class of invention, and is directed to a statutory subject matter.

15 In addition, as the physical result (i.e., a warning message) is showed on a hardware device (i.e., monitor), a real-world result is produced. In other words, a tangible result is produced by the claimed invention. The applicant believes that the invention as claimed does produce a useful, concrete, and tangible result.

Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully requested.

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Claims 11-14

Claim 14 is cancelled due to amendment of claim 10. Claims 11-14 are dependent upon claim 10, and are directed to statutory subject matter if claim 10 satisfies the requirements in 35 U.S.C. 101.

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Claims 15-20

The claimed invention of claims 15-20 is an hardware apparatus which falls within at least one of the four enumerated categories of patentable subject matter recited in 35 U.S.C. 101 (i.e., process, machine, manufacture, and composition of matter). Besides, the claimed hardware apparatus implemented for checking the validity of the business trip

electronic form inputted by the user and then storing the verified business trip electronic form into a storage is a practical application that is not directed to abstract ideas, natural phenomena, and laws of nature. Therefore, as the claimed invention of claims 15-20 falls within an enumerated statutory category and does not fall within 35 U.S.C. 101 judicial exceptions - laws of nature, natural phenomena and abstract ideas, the applicant believes that claims 15-20 are in compliance with the statutory requirements for patent eligible subject matter. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 101 is respectfully requested.

10 **Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103**

Claims 1-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Vance et al., U.S. Patent No. 6,442,526 in view of Head 101 Common Indicators of Errors (2001).

Response:

Claim 1

15 Examiner stated that checking travel dates for continuity (e.g. **start date less than end date, duplicate dates, etc**) is old and well known (page 9 of the Office action dated 11/19/2008). However, the applicant would like to point out that this is by no means analogous to checking whether a **business trip period** recorded in a business trip electronic form is continuous. In addition, as acknowledged by Examiner 20 (page 9 of the Office action dated 11/19/2008), Vance et al. does not expressly teach determining whether a predetermined business trip period recorded by the business trip electronic form is continuous as claimed. However, Examiner stated: “Head teaches determining whether a predetermined business trip is continuous (Numbers 8, 13, 16, 34, 37) in an analogous art of business management for the purposes of 25 catching common accounting/business errors”. The applicant respectfully disagrees with Examiner’s point of view, and would like to point that the teachings of Head are mistakenly considered by Examiner. Rationale is given as follows.

First, the applicant respectfully notes that Head’s indicator (8) under the heading “Fraudulent” and Head’s indicators (13) and (16) under the heading “Vendor Kickbacks/Bid Rigging” are irrelevant to determining whether a predetermined

business trip period is continuous. With regard to the indicator (34) under the heading “Duplicate Claims”, Head merely teaches that an error is detected when travel dates overlap. However, the applicant respectfully notes that detecting two or more overlapped travel dates is not analogous to determining whether a predetermined business trip period is continuous. Specifically, Head fails to teach or suggest, expressly or implicitly, that detecting duplicate travel dates is to determine whether a predetermined business trip period is continuous. Similarly, regarding the indicator (37) under the heading “Fraudulent Claims”, Head merely teaches that an error is detected when the same receipts (airline, hotel, meal, etc.) are submitted a few months apart. However, the applicant respectfully notes that detecting same receipts submitted a few months apart is not analogous to determining whether a predetermined business trip period is continuous. Specifically, Head fails to teach or suggest, expressly or implicitly, that detecting fraudulent receipts is to determine whether a predetermined business trip period is continuous. Briefly summarized, the applicant asserts that the claimed feature “determining whether a predetermined business trip period is continuous” is neither taught nor suggested by Head.

Furthermore, additional note is respectfully made by the applicant that claim 1 defines the steps of determining whether a predetermined business trip period recorded by the business trip electronic form is continuous, and then storing the business trip electronic form into a storage module if the predetermined business trip period is continuous. This means that the validity of the business trip electronic form must be checked before the verified business trip electronic form is allowed to be stored. The applicant asserts that such a claimed feature is not taught or suggested by the cited references. In the Office action dated 11/19/2008, Examiner stated that Vance et al. teaches analyzing the business trip record and matching business trip request form against business rules (policies, constraints, etc.; Column 2, Lines 15-24, 49-54; Column 6, Lines 40-55; Column 7, Lines 10-47; Column 11, Lines 14-19; Figures 8, 10, 13). However, as clearly shown in Fig.4 which is a diagram illustrating the trip planning 68 in Fig.3, Vance et al. discloses that the authorized trip request process 120 and the cancel booking process 124 both retrieve the needed trip request

forms from the trip database 128. Specifically, Vance et al. expressly teaches: “The traveler 86 receives stored trip data 126 from and trip table 128 and may select a stored trip to cancel from the list (col. 6, lines 28-30)”. Therefore, according to teachings of Vance et al., the trip request form submitted by the user is stored in the trip database 128 in the trip planning 68 of Fig. 3 before other functional elements in Fig. 3 are activated. The applicant respectfully points out that analyzing the business trip record and matching business trip request form against business rules as taught by Vance et al. is performed after the business trip record has been stored in the business trip record database. Besides, upon thorough review of the disclosure of Vance et al., 5 the applicant finds no description pertinent to checking a criterion to see if the business trip record is allowed to be stored into the business trip record database. In addition, the applicant finds that Head’s disclosure is also silent on checking a criterion to see if the business trip record is allowed to be stored into the business trip record database. Therefore, the claimed feature “storing the business trip electronic 10 form if the predetermined business trip period is continuous” is not taught or suggested by Vance et al. in view of Head. (*emphasis added*)

In light of at least above reasons, the applicant asserts that claim 1 should be found allowable over Vance et al. in view of Head. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

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Claims 2-9

Claim 9 has been canceled. Claims 2-8 are dependent upon claim 1, and should be allowed if claim 1 is found allowable.

25 Claim 10

In the Office action dated 11/19/2008, Examiner stated that Vance et al. teaches reading and comparing a first and second business trip electronic form previously applied by the user (Column 2, Lines 15-24, 49-54; Column 6, Lines 40-55; Column 7, Lines 10-47; Column 11, Lines 14-19; Figures 8, 10, 13). However, the applicant 30 respectfully disagrees with Examiner’s point of view. After reviewing the cited

passages, including col. 2, lines 15-24, 49-54; col. 6, lines 40-55; col. 7, lines 10-47; col. 11, lines 14-19, and drawing figures 8, 10, and 13 as taught by Vance et al., the applicant finds no description pertinent to **comparing different trip request forms** applied by the same user at different timings (i.e., a business trip electronic form

5 currently applied by the user with a business trip electronic form previously applied by the user). Specifically, upon thorough review of the teachings of Vance et al., the applicant respectfully points out that Vance et al. fails to teach reading and comparing a first and second business trip electronic form previously applied by the user. In addition, Head also fails to teach reading and comparing a first and second business

10 trip electronic form previously applied by the user. The applicant therefore asserts that the claimed feature “comparing a first business trip period recorded by the first business trip electronic form with a second business trip period recorded by the second business trip electronic form” is neither taught nor suggested by Vance et al. in view of Head. (*emphasis added*)

15 Furthermore, additional note is respectfully made by the applicant that claim 10 defines the steps of comparing a first business trip period recorded by the first business trip electronic form with a second business trip period recorded by the second business trip electronic form, and then storing the first business trip electronic form into a storage module if the first business trip period does not overlap the second business trip period. This means that the validity of the first business trip electronic form must be checked before the first business trip electronic form is allowed to be stored. The applicant asserts that such a claimed feature is not taught or suggested by the cited references. Specifically, upon careful review of teachings of Vance et al., the applicant finds no description pertinent to checking a criterion to see if the business

20 trip record is allowed to be stored into the business trip record database. In addition, Head’s disclosure is also silent on checking a criterion to see if the business trip record is allowed to be stored into the business trip record database. Therefore, the claimed feature “storing the first business trip electronic form if the first business trip period does not overlap the second business trip period” is not taught or suggested by

25 Vance et al. in view of Head. (*emphasis added*)

In light of at least above reasons, the applicant asserts that claim 10 should be found allowable over Vance et al. in view of Head. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

5 Claims 11-14

Claim 14 has been canceled. Claims 11-13 are dependent upon claim 10, and should be allowed if claim 10 is found allowable.

Claim 15

10 Claim 15 is an apparatus claim which includes limitations similar to that recited in the corresponding method claim (i.e., claim 1). In view of the above arguments of claim 1, the applicant asserts that claim 15 should be found allowable over the cited prior art. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

15 Claims 16-17

Claims 16-17 are dependent upon claim 15, and should be allowed if claim 15 is found allowable.

Claim 18

20 Claim 18 is an apparatus claim which includes limitations similar to that recited in the corresponding method claim (i.e., claim 10). In view of the above arguments of claim 10, the applicant asserts that claim 18 should be found allowable over the cited prior art. Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) is respectfully requested.

25 Claims 19-20

Claims 19-20 are dependent upon claim 18, and should be allowed if claim 18 is found allowable.

Conclusion

30 Based on the above remarks/arguments, the applicant respectfully submits that all

of the objections and rejections set forth in the Office action dated Nov. 19, 2008 have been overcome and the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. If a telephone conference would facilitate the prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned applicant's representative at the
5 number indicated below.

Sincerely yours,

/Winston Hsu/

Date: 01/08/2009

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Note: Please leave a message in my voice mail if you need to talk to me. (The time in D.C. is 13 hours behind the Taiwan time, i.e. 9 AM in D.C. = 10 PM in Taiwan.)